

State Department guns for civil war in Philippines

by Linda de Hoyos

The presidential campaign in the Philippines, between President Ferdinand Marcos and opposition leader Corazon Aquino, is fast gaining in intensity, as voting day on Feb. 7 nears. As of the middle of January, the U.S. State Department has displayed its full-fledged support for the opposition ticket, shared by Aquino, widow of the slain opposition leader Benigno Aquino, and her vice-presidential running mate, Salvador Laurel, scion of a major oligarchical family that governed the Philippines during the days of the Japanese occupation.

For the Philippines and for the United States, the State Department policy is a disaster. If the State Department scenario prevails, the Philippines will be hurled into civil war and the U.S. bases at Clark Field and Subic Bay will be withdrawn. That is precisely the State Department intention; the Philippines is being sacrificed in the new Yalta deal between the State Department and its counterparts in the Kremlin.

The opposition ticket declared Jan. 4 that if elected, it will work to turn all of Southeast Asia—the U.S.-allied nations of ASEAN—into a neutral zone. The opposition further pledged that it would maintain only those agreements entered into by Marcos that cohere with its idea of national security. The presence of the U.S. bases on the islands “is an open option.” The lease rights for the bases runs out in 1991.

But it is unlikely that if Aquino is elected Feb. 7, the U.S. bases would last that long. Since New Year's, Aquino has pitched her campaign to the left in the Philippines—as *the natural base for her campaign*. She is working with Cardinal Jaime Sin, patriarch of Theology of Liberation left-wing in the Philippines, to attempt to negotiate a ceasefire between

the government and the terrorist New People's Army.

Marcos has also charged that Aquino's brother-in-law Agapito has offered the separatist Muslim Moro Liberation Front a deal for full secession of the island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, if the Front comes out for Aquino. It is definitely known that Aquino recently met with Moro leaders. Aquino has also promised that if elected, she will release all political prisoners, including the many communist terrorists and their protectors incarcerated by the Marcos government. She vowed that if the communists “renounce violence,” she will bring them into the government.

President Marcos's declarations that the election is a “struggle between democracy and communism” precisely express the reality. If Aquino is elected, it will be the left in the Philippines that dictates the terms to the government—until such time as the Aquino-Laurel combination is itself swept out of government.

That is the scenario the State Department has elected for the Philippines.

Set-up for Marcos

On Dec. 14, Philippines Political Affairs Minister Leonardo Peres accused the American Central Intelligence Agency of interfering in the elections, and stated that “certain high U.S. embassy officials have played a key role in helping certain political groups form a presidential ticket.”

State Department and embassy conduct toward the Philippines proves Peres to be correct. It was the United States that pressured Marcos to call the elections in the first place, claiming that in this way, the President could polish his tarnished international reputation by winning a new mandate.

State Department intervention began when U.S. Ambassador Stephen Bosworth forced Aquino and Salvador Laurel to sit down and iron out their differences—after both had announced that they would run separately. A divided opposition would have had no chance or credibility against the well-oiled local and grassroots machine of the ruling KBL party. To further boost the opposition, it has been reported from sources throughout Southeast Asia and Washington that the Aquino ticket has been the recipient of \$30 million from Washington, laundered through Hong Kong.

In Washington, State Department desk officer John Mais to is working closely with Sonny Alvarez's Ninoy Aquino Movement, and is considered "a darling" by the NAM staffers. "Of course he has to follow some lines of the official line that they [the State Department] have," but "he tells us some reports and that sort of thing."

The embassy in Manila has made no attempt to hide its preferences. After Aquino campaign staffers complained loudly that they were being denied equivalent time on the national television networks, on Jan. 13, Bosworth stepped forward to state that the opposition's equal access to the Philippines media is "an important test" in determining whether next month's election is credible. "Everyone here as well as in the United States," he intoned, "is concerned over the need to ensure that all of the voices in the opposition have an adequate opportunity to be heard." Bosworth delivered the State Department's declaration to cut Marcos, and the Philippines, loose: The United States, he said, would have "serious difficulty" dealing with a government elected in a contest not viewed as credible.

Simultaneously, from Washington, the House Foreign Relations Committee announced that it was launching an investigation into evidence that Marcos has personally bought property in the United States worth millions of dollars. This allegation, first aired by the CIA-connected *San Jose Mercury News*, was used to give the flagging opposition a new lease on life this summer. The Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee, chaired by Soviet-Mossad asset Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), announced that the report on its investigation will be out within the week—available to plastered over the international press before election day.

After this announcement, the front page of the *Washington Post* Jan. 17 aired "U.S. intelligence reports" that Marcos is in the throes of another attack of the disease lupus and according to their sources, "looking terribly fatigued and exhausted." Marcos's health, the *Washington Post* chortles, is "one of the critical wild cards in the election." However, on page 17, the *Post* runs an op-ed by Evans Novak reporting, "Haranguing a crowd of 60,000 in this opposition stronghold [Naga City] for one hour and 25 minutes, the 68-year-old Marcos scarcely looked like the Manila-bound invalid supposed in Washington. He went on to Legaspi to deliver another stemwinder to about 40,000, this one lasting over an hour."

The point of the reams of disinformation coming from

Washington is to prepare the climate in which Washington can protest a Marcos election as "not credible"—signaling civil war for the Philippines.

Violence and counter-violence

The escalating cycle of violence and counter-violence between the NPA and the military is now closing in on the election itself. On Jan. 15, one of Marcos's personal pilots was gunned down as he stepped out of his home near Manila. The assailants reportedly took from his pocket a paper with Marcos's flight schedule during his campaign tour.

On Jan. 16, Jeremías de Jesús, a godson of Mrs. Aquino, also on her campaign staff, was killed along with his driver, while driving on a dirt road outside of Manila. The State Department issued an immediate statement deploring the action, declaring: "We deplore the killing and hope that those guilty are brought to justice swiftly," the implication being that the killers were deployed by the Marcos machine.

That is not necessarily the case; such violence does not benefit the Marcos campaign. Ramsey Clark, who works with the Ninoy Aquino Movement in the United States, declared to an astonished associate that President Marcos could be assassinated, but that the real danger was to Cory Aquino. Questioned as to who would mount such an assassination, Clark replied: "It can be from anywhere. It can be from, well, 'crazy' is not a kind word but conditions like this generate a lot of very disoriented people, which I have always felt was really behind the Martin Luther King or the John Kennedy assassinations." As U.S. attorney general under Lyndon Johnson, Clark knows only too well the fraudulence of the "lone nut" theory of assassinations of major public figures. The question is posed: Is Clark cognizant of, and perhaps in on, a plot to make a bloody martyr out of the politically naive Cory Aquino?

Clark represents precisely that anglophile interface to Soviet intelligence that has orchestrated the destabilization of the Philippines from the beginning—perhaps including the traumatic murder of Benigno Aquino himself. On Nov. 23-24, Clark played a prominent role, along with leading figures from Moscow and East Germany, in a so-called "Nuremberg Tribunal" in West Germany against the proponents of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Whether Clark and his gang go so far as to target Mrs. Aquino herself, there is no question but that the way is being prepared for massive violence after Feb. 7, no matter who the victor is. The leftist Bayan party declared Jan. 17 that there is "no chance at all" that Aquino will win, and they will mount a major campaign of protest against the Marcos government after the elections. Bayan leaders blamed the United States for an expected Marcos victory.

In the first instance, a clear-cut Marcos victory is required to avert such violence. But if the United States does not reverse its current treasonous policy toward the Philippines, it will become increasingly difficult for even a newly mandated Marcos government to bring stability to the country.